

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
US Appln. 09/782,036

Atty. Docket: Q64239

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing a floor covering comprising the steps of :

scattering powder, granules or pellets of a thermoplastic material onto a first substrate to form a first coating;

applying a second substrate over the first coating;

scattering powder, granules or pellets of a thermoplastic material onto the second substrate, after said second substrate has been applied over the first coating, to form a second coating

leading ~~the~~ the second substrate between a ~~pair of belts~~ belt of a low pressure ~~double belt~~ press and ~~said first substrate~~;

applying heat to fuse the coatings between the ~~belts~~ belt and the first substrate;

smoothing the fused coatings between a pair of nipping rollers to provide a layer of desired thickness; and

cooling the layer.

2. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one of the substrates is a fibre matt material.

3. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 25, wherein the fibre matt has less than 100 g of glass fibre per m² of material.

4. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the fibre matt has less than 65g of glass fibre per m² of material.

5. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the fibre matt has from 30 to 50 g of glass fibre per m² of material

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6-7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 including a step of adjusting a gap between the nip rollers.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first substrate is defined by a lower one of the belts belt of the low pressure press.

11. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the second coating is of the same material as the first coating.

12. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the second coating is of a different material than the first coating.

13. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the first coating is of a saturation material to form, on heating, a saturation layer.

14. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the second coating is of a basecoat material to form, on heating, a basecoat layer.

15. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the thermoplastic material on one of the first and second substrates ~~is scattered to form~~ forms, on heating, a saturation layer to receive a basecoat layer.

16. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the thermoplastic material on one of the first and second substrates ~~is scattered to form~~ forms, on heating, a basecoat layer.

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17. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein ~~the basecoat is formed by a method including the steps of: the first substrate includes a saturation layer and the thermoplastic scattered onto the first substrate includes a basecoat-forming material, and~~
~~scattering a basecoat-forming material as the thermoplastic material onto a saturation layer of the first substrate; and~~
~~the applying heat forms wherein the thermoplastic on the first substrate forms, upon the heat applying, a basecoat layer on the saturation layer.~~

18. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first substrate is defined by ~~one of the belts~~ a second belt of the low pressure press.

19. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 including the steps of:
scattering a first thermoplastic material onto a ~~first belt~~ lower belt of the low pressure press; and
applying the first substrate over the first thermoplastic material,
wherein said scattering of powder, granules or pellets onto a first substrate comprises scattering a second thermoplastic material onto the first substrate, and
further wherein said applying heat to fuse the coatings comprises fusing the thermoplastic material to form a backing layer on one face of the first substrate and a saturation or basecoat layer on the other face of the first substrate.

20. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 19 wherein the second thermoplastic material forms a saturation layer and the method includes the steps of:
scattering a third thermoplastics material over the saturation layer;
loading the substrates between ~~a pair of belts~~ the belt and the lower belt; and
applying heat to the belts to fuse the third thermoplastic material to form a basecoat layer on the saturation layer.

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21. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, comprising a step, after heating, of leading the substrates over a smoothing roller prior to cooling.
22. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the ~~substrates are~~ layer is cooled, after fusing by leading the ~~pair of belts~~ layer through a cooling station.
23. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least one of the substrates is a mineral felt.
24. (Canceled)
25. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein at least one of the substrates is a glass fibre matt material.
26. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 21, wherein the substrates are supported on ~~one of the belts~~ a lower belt of the low pressure press as it the lower belt is led over the smoothing roller.
27. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, comprising a step of leading the substrates over a smoothing roller, wherein the method includes the step of heating and/or cooling the substrates as they are led over the smoothing roller.
28. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 27, wherein the substrates are heated or cooled by heating or cooling the smoothing roller.
29. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 27, wherein the substrates are led over an infeed roller to the smoothing roller.

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30. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the substrates are led over an outfeed roller from the smoothing roller.

31. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 30, wherein the substrates are heated or cooled as they are led over the infeed and/or outfeed rollers.

32. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said step of scattering powder, granules or pellets onto the second substrate comprises scattering powder, granules or pellets of a thermoplastic material onto the second substrate, after said second substrate has been contacted with the first coating.